

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 ACDA-07 /087 W
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R 130931Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7971
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L NIAMEY 4244
E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, NG, CH
SUBJECT: NIGER PRESIDENT TO VISIT CHINA

1. PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE WILL MAKE AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO CHINA DURING LAST TWO WEEKSXAF SEPTEMBER. IT WILL BE HIS FIRST TRIP TO A COMMUNIST COUNTRY SINCE COMING TO POWER 1974.
2. DOMESTICALLY, KOUNTCHE'S JOURNEY SHOULD PRODUCE GOOD VIBRATIONS FOR HIM AND HIS MILITARY REGIME AND AFFORD AMPLE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-PORTRAYAL OF NIGER AS A SOBER AND SERIOUS, IF NOT PARTICULARLY INFLUENTIAL, PARTICIPANT IN LDC AFFAIRS AND ONE SENSIBLY BROADENING ITS CONTACTSULITH FRIENDLY MAJOR POWERS.
3. KOUNTCHE'S PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE TRIP, ON THE OTHER HAND WILL BE SHAPED MORE BY HIS BASIC ANTI-SOVIET STANCE AND PREOCCUPATION WITH LIMITING
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USSR'S INROADS IN AFRICA -- NOT ONLY SOUTHERN TIER AND HORN BUT WHAT HE REGARDS AS UNRELENTING SOVIET DESIGNS IN WEST AFRICA WITH NIGERIA AS AN ULTIMATE PROZE. HOW MUCH AND HOW FRANKLY HE WILL GO INTO THESE MATTERS WITH CHINESE WILL BE HARD TO KNOW, BUT KOUNTCHE UNDOUBTEDLY WILL BE MAKING HIS OWN ASSMENT OF CHINESE LEADERSHIP AND WHAT IT HAS TO OFFER

ECONOMICALLY AND POLITICALLY AS COUNTERWEIGHNCOO
SOVIETS AT A TIME WHEN, IN HIS VIEW, AFRICA IS RIVEN
WITH CONFLICT AND IS PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE AND WEAK.

4. KOUNTCHE IS A REALIST ABOUT CHINA AND WILL BE
INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT IT FIRST HAND. CERTAINLY
HE SEES LIMITS ON CHINESE POWER AND HE HAS NO FONDNESS FOR
EITHER COMMUNISM OR MASS MOBILISATION REGIMES. NEVERTHELESS,
ASSUMING CHINESE SENSE KOUNTCHE'S APPREHENSIONS ABOUT THE
USSR, HE AND THEY HAVE A RESONABLY GOOD BASIS FOR AT LEAST
A MODERATE EXPANSION OF TIES JUST NOW AND THIS LATES INVITATION
FOR AN AFRICAN PILGRIMAGE TO PEKING IS WELL TIMED.
JAMES

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 13-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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